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HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Costs and modalities of staff representational activities: financial data pertaining to United Nations staff associations and unions

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 49/222 A of 23 December 1994 on human resources management. In section V, paragraph 1 of the resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to issue a corrigendum to his report on the costs of staff representational activities (A/C.5/47/59) and to report separately to the Assembly, at the earliest possible opportunity, on the modalities and costs of staff representation since 1992. In response to that request, the Secretary-General submitted two reports (A/C.5/49/63 and A/C.5/49/64, both of 31 May 1995) to the General Assembly at its resumed forty-ninth session.

2. Also at the resumed forty-ninth session, in July 1995, an informal, oral report was presented on the outcome of staff-management consultations on the formulation of a quantifiable definition of "reasonable time" for staff representational activities. At its fiftieth session, the General Assembly decided to defer consideration of the report of the Secretary-General until its resumed fiftieth session (decision 50/454 of 22 December 1995). The Secretary-General was requested to submit a formal report on the definition of reasonable time for staff representational activities formulated through staff-management consultations (see A/C.5/50/SR.42).

3. As requested, the General Assembly had before it at its resumed fiftieth session the report of the Secretary-General on reasonable time for staff representational activities (A/C.5/50/64 dated 10 May 1996). The report

described the quantifiable definition of reasonable time for staff representational activities recommended by the Staff-Management Coordination Committee (SMCC) at its nineteenth session, in June 1995.

4. At its resumed fiftieth session, the General Assembly considered the three reports of the Secretary-General, receiving additional information regarding the notional costs of applying the definitions recommended by SMCC (see A/C.5/50/SR.60), as well as information on the direct and indirect costs of staff representational activities, and data provided by staff associations/ unions throughout the global Secretariat on their paying membership levels, assets, expenditures and activities. By its decision 50/483 of 7 June 1996, the Assembly decided to defer consideration of the reports of the Secretary-General on the costs and modalities of staff representational activities until its fifty-first session.

5. The Secretary-General was requested to refrain from implementing the recommendations of SMCC on the definition of reasonable time for staff representational activities pending the Assembly's consideration of the matter (see A/C.5/50/SR.64). The Secretary-General has complied with that request.

6. The Secretary-General was also requested to present a written report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the direct and indirect costs of staff representational activities, including the data provided by the staff associations/unions (ibid.). The present report is submitted in response to that request.

II. DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS OF STAFF REPRESENTATIONAL ACTIVITIES

7. As explained in an earlier report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/C.5/49/64, para. 8), the costs of staff representational activities and the staff-management consultative process can be identified as both direct costs against the regular budget and indirect costs in terms of the release of staff from their assigned programme duties.

8. For the purposes of the reports currently before the General Assembly, direct costs against the regular budget comprise the salaries of support staff financed specifically for service with staff associations and unions, travel costs and subsistence payments related to attendance at SMCC meetings and expenditures related to supplies, equipment and communications. It should be noted that staff associations and unions, as a general rule, finance their travel to other meetings. Travel and per diem related to SMCC sessions during the period from 1992 to the present are as follows: 1992: $87,474; 1993: $56,767; 1994: $67,587; 1995: $108,000; 1996: $138,875.

9. Indirect costs comprise the amount of staff time devoted to staff representational activities or on official travel to attend intra-organizational, inter-organizational or intergovernmental meetings, which represent either part-time or full-time release from assigned programme duties without replacement. In this connection, it should be noted that in 1996, there was an instance where the programme manager was reluctant to release a staff

association officer without provision of a suitable replacement. In such circumstances, replacing the officer would have to be shown as a direct cost. Indirect costs also incorporate the costs of office space and documentation services, which are absorbed within existing budgetary provisions. These definitions were applied by the Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly on the costs and modalities of staff representatives during the biennium 1990-1991 (A/C.5/49/63) and the years 1992, 1993 and 1994 (A/C.5/49/64).

10. Table 1 shows the notional indirect costs of the application of the formula recommended by SMCC at its nineteenth session for defining reasonable time for staff representational activities. In reviewing these notional costs, the following points should be recalled:

(a) The SMCC-recommended formula introduces specific, quantifiable definitions and responds to the view by the United Nations Administrative Tribunal that "the concept of 'reasonable time' calls for a definition which is not contained in the administrative texts". 1/ The SMCC recommendations are in full consonance with the efforts of the Organization to strengthen its systems of accountability and responsibility;

(b) In arriving at the notional indirect costs of the SMCC-recommended formula, the mid-range of the salary scales (P-1 level) has been utilized, adjusting, as appropriate, for each duty station in the light of post adjustment indicators. Notional costs have been reflected, since actual costs can only be identified on an ex post facto basis, when the personal salary level of the duly elected staff representative/officer is known.

Table 1. Indirect costs of staff representational activities: application of the SMCC-recommended definition of reasonable time

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Staff costs	Indirect costs
New York	776.9
Geneva	424.0
Vienna	296.7
Addis Ababa	144.6
Amman	105.1
Bangkok	104.9
Nairobi	130.2
Santiago	113.7
Jerusalem	165.6
Field	174.6
Total	2 436.3

11. For illustrative purposes, table 2 gives a breakdown of the actual expenditures reported for 1994, as reflected in table 3 of the report of the Secretary-General on the cost of staff representational activities during 1992, 1993 and 1994 (A/C.5/49/64). This is the most recent data available from all duty stations. The indirect staff costs shown in table 2 relate to the full- or part-time release of the President/Executive Secretary and, in the case of New York, the First and Second Vice-Presidents of the local staff association/ union during 1994. They do not reflect the time of other staff association/ union officers or members of the Council, as the term "reasonable time" in respect of their activities has hitherto not been defined in quantifiable terms. Indirect costs also relate to general operating expenses (office space) as well as documentation services. Direct costs include Staff Association support staff as well as expenditures for supplies and equipment as well as communications.

Table 2. Direct and indirect costs of staff representational activities in 1994

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	Staff costs		General operating expenses (office space)	Documen-tation	Supplies and equipment	Communi-cations	Total
	Direct	Indirect	Indirect		Direct		
New York	102.4	199.5	28.5	3.8	8.0	8.1	350.3
Geneva	178.2	55.2	81.6	14.5	0.6	10.0	340.1
Vienna	25.2	25.2	16.8	0.3	3.8	1.7	73.0
Addis Ababa	12.1	12.1	2.3	0.9	1.7	1.8	30.7
Amman	16.0	8.5	1.5	0.5	1.2	2.5	30.2
Bangkok	10.5	41.5	-	1.8	10.6	1.0	65.4
Nairobi	5.4	6.4	4.4	-	1.3	1.6	19.1
Santiago	35.2	53.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.0	94.1
Jerusalem	-	14.6	-	-	0.1	0.5	15.2
Total	385.0	416.5	136.6	23.3	28.7	28.2	1 018.3

Note: Total direct costs amounted to $441,900 and total indirect costs to $576,400.

III. MEMBERSHIP, FINANCIAL DATA AND ACTIVITIES OF STAFF ASSOCIATIONS AND UNIONS

12. Staff associations and unions throughout the global Secretariat were asked to provide the information and data on their paying membership levels, assets, expenditures and activities. The information provided in the annex to the present report is submitted in the form received from the respective staff association or union.

Notes

1/ See United Nations Administrative Tribunal Judgement No. 679: Fagan, paragraph XII.

ANNEX*

[Original: English/French/Spanish]

Membership, financial data and activities of staff associations

I. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA STAFF UNION

ECA Staff Union dues (receipts)

The staff subscribes to its Staff Union every two years in local currency during election time. The Staff Union has no means of converting these funds into hard currency.

Below are some examples of the two years subscriptions of the staff to the Union:

	United States dollars
1991-1992	5 662
1993-1994	11 712
1995-1996	27 308

N.B. US$ = 6.32 Birr.

ECA Staff Union expenditures

Every year, the ECA Staff Union pays $1,500 in dues to the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA). Daily subsistence allowance to attend the CCISUA meeting every year is paid from the local ECA Staff Union budget, whereas CCISUA pays for the travel ticket.

II. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC STAFF ASSOCIATION

ESCAP Staff Association dues (receipts)

Every ESCAP staff member is automatically a member of the Staff Association. Contributions to the Association are made strictly on a voluntary basis. Annually, the level of such contributions has been in the region of $12,000 only.

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* The present annex is being issued without formal editing.

ESCAP Staff Association expenditures

Of the amount, approximately US$ 6,500 has been used to finance the attendance of the alternate representative to the annual SMCC and pre-SMCC meetings. The meagre balance of about US$ 5,500 has been used as subsidies for the following activities which, in other organizations in Thailand, have been financed by employers:

(a) Sports activities and internal tournament events of the staff (physical fitness equipment, table tennis, bowling, snookers and billiards, swimming, tennis, football, badminton, etc.);

(b) Annual Staff Day;

(c) Staff incentive and recognition programme [e.g. commemorative plaques for long service (20 years or more)].

III. FIELD SERVICE STAFF UNION

FSSU Staff Union dues (receipts)

	US dollars
Voluntary contributions from Members	17 110
Contribution from CCISUA for travel costs to Santiago	5 932
Total	23 042

FSSU Staff Union expenditures

	US dollars
Contribution to CCISUA	5 100
Travel costs to attend CCISUA	6 104
Travel costs for FSSC council meeting (spring 1995)	1 892
Travel costs for FSSC council meeting (autumn 1995)	2 966
Daily subsistence allowance for alternate member in SMCC (Amman, June 1995)	1 727
Preparation meeting in Cyprus for fifth special SMCC	637
Purchase of fax machine for FSSU	440
Costs for commercially transmitted faxes	50
Bank charges	27
Total	23 948

Costs for Field Service Staff Council meetings are expected to be higher in 1996, because the interest is increasing. Also, the costs for SMCC in

September 1996 are expected to be higher because the venue is New York. Last year there were no travel costs for the FSSU because of the vicinity of Amman.

IV. UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA STAFF COORDINATING COUNCIL

UNOG Staff Coordinating Council dues (receipts)

There are approximately 600 dues-paying members. Staff are not required to pay dues to the Council. They are automatically members. Payment of dues is completely voluntary and the Council suggests a monthly contribution of $5.

	US dollars
INCOME	537 500
Balance at bank	225 000
Special Account	150 000
Bills receivable: ASIFI	17 500
Subscriptions: voluntary contributions	60 000
Notice boards	20 000
Staff Day	60 000
UN Special 1996	5 000
Reserve fund	36 000

UNOG Staff Coordinating Council expenditures

	US dollars
EXPENDITURES	573 500
Staff defence and administrative costs	433 500
Surveys and studies	60 000
Staff representation: meetings	50 000
- Representation costs	4 000
- ICSC, ACPAQ, CCAQ, UNJSPF, General Assembly (US$ 75,000)	112 500
Subscriptions/contributions CCISUA (US$ 60,000)	90 000
Special fund for members of CCISUA	5 000
Data-processing	25 000
- Hardware and software: 20 000	
- Training course: 5 000	

	US dollars
Provisions: administrative costs	5 000
Account: special reserves	50 000
Payable: Council bill 1995/1996	32 000
GRANTS	140 000
Socio-cultural activities	50 000
- Sports committee: Inter-Organization Games	
- Concerts, theatre, shows	
- Book clubs, Literary Club: magazines	
- Art exhibition: preview	
- Sports clubs	
- Assistance to staff members on missions	
- Fund: natural disasters	
Children's Party	25 000
Staff Day	60 000
Solidarity Fund	5 000

UNOG Staff Coordinating Council activities

The Staff Coordinating Council financed all of its travel activities to participate in intergovernmental and inter-organizational meetings, e.g. ICSC, CCAQ, ACC, ACPAQ. These meetings were held mostly in New York. Management provided funds for the UNOG representatives to participate in SMCC-XIX in Amman, Jordan. The Council updates its hardware and software equipment. The Council finances all studies to defend staff interests prepared by any specialized company. A large contribution is paid as annual dues to the CCISUA Federation as membership dues.

The Staff Coordinating Council sponsors a number of staff welfare activities. These activities cover a subsidy to staff members to participate in the Inter-Organization Games organized by the United Nations Commission for Sports in Geneva. These games have been organized since 1970 in close cooperation with UNOG management. It has helped to develop the image of the United Nations in Europe as it has been held in different small cities in Switzerland, France, Italy and Austria over these years. Other activities cover socio-cultural activities: Several literary clubs of different cultures and several periodicals, sports clubs, gym club, and art exhibitions by staff members. The Mission Fund is a fund set up to assist staff members sent on missions, who might need any personal financial assistance. The catastrophe fund is a fund set up to contribute to any country for social welfare when there is a natural catastrophe. The UNOG Staff Coordinating Council organizes financially the Children's Party at the end of each year for children below ten years of staff members and Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva. Management

provides for all administrative costs, including the location for the party in the building. The Solidarity Fund is set up to give financial assistance to staff members. The Staff Counsellor is a member of this fund composed of elected staff members.

The Staff has an active Committee on Security and Independence of the International Civil Service. This Committee has been instrumental in obtaining the release of staff members throughout the world. A joint staff-management fact-finding mission last year was undertaken to the Middle East. This Committee has an overdue loan to the Council for a specific financial assistance to a staff member with the assurance that it will be refunded by Management.

An annual general meeting is held at the end of each year to report on the activities of the Council. A complete financial report is given to each member at the time of the review. All accounts are audited by auditors elected at the annual general meeting. The audited statements are provided to the staff representatives for a review.

The actual expenditures for the Council were far less than the budget figure because the Council decided to cut down on certain expenses due to the financial crisis in the economic world. The excess of expenditure were down-scaled to meet the receipts. The amount of staff representation at meetings were on the average as stipulated in the budget because of the Council's decision of participation in intergovernmental meetings. The budget figures show an excess. This excess amount, according to the statutes of the Council, is the special and reserve fund from the Purchase and Order Group of the International Civil Servants. This special fund is the reliquae of the amount, which are not claimed at the end of the year, when the benefits are distributed to members. This occurs as so many delegates have access to such facilities, but are not in Geneva to claim any benefits.

V. NEW YORK STAFF UNION

New York Staff Union dues (receipts)

At the present time, there are approximately 3,000 dues-paying members. However, staff are not required to pay dues to the Union - they are automatically members. Payment of dues is completely voluntary and the Staff Union suggests a contribution of 1/400th of a staff member's net income. The budget set out below clarifies further the type of activities sponsored each year.

	Approved budget	Income	Variance
	(US dollars)		
	1 March 1994 through 31 March 1996		
Contributions	225 000	244 176	(19 176)
Interest income	75 000	133 135	(58 135)
Support from other associations	10 000	0	10 000
Advertisement	0	1 770	(1 770)
Total	310 000	379 081	(69 081)

New York Staff Union expenditures

	Approved budget	Expenditures	Variance
	(US dollars)		
Overtime/temporary assistance	5 000	3 107	1 893
Consultants	30 000	1 420	28 580
Security and independence	40 000	8 694	31 306
Accounting and auditing	13 000	8 900	4 100
Legal advice/support	40 000	8 701	31 299
Travel and subsistence	20 000	26 817	(6 817)
Office supplies	1 000	295	(705)
Staff newspaper	80 000	20 559	59 441
Miscellaneous printing	1 000	55	945
Express mail	1 000	0	1 000
Child care bursary	70 000	14 400	55 600
Staff Emergency Fund	20 000	0	20 000
Staff Day - 1995	0	3 000	(3 000)
Staff Day - 1994	13 000	2 805	10 195
Staff Day - 1993	0	31 432	(31 432)
Staff action	10 000	48	9 952
CCISUA-advances	100 000	100 000	0
Fund-raising drive	5 000	2 800	2 200
Hospitality	5 000	5 761	(761)
Unforeseen expenditures	10 000	3 480	6 520
Depreciation	0	1 325	(1 325)
Bank charges	0	62	(62)

	Approved budget	Expenditures	Variance
	(US dollars)		
Unpaid bills/36th Council	13 000	0	13 000
UNFSSU	10 300	0	10 300
50th anniversary of the United Nations	10 000	34 170	(24 170)
Total	497 300	277 831	219 469
Excess of income over expenditures	(187 300)	(101 250)	(288 550)

New York Staff Union activities

United Nations management was not required throughout 1995 to finance any travel or other activities of the Staff Union. The local Staff Committee financed all of its own travel activities to participate in intergovernmental meetings (e.g. ICSC, CCAQ, ACC, ACPAQ, the Inter-Agency Advisory Group on AIDS (IAAG), etc.). The only funding provided by management was for the representative's participation in SMCC-XIX in Amman.

The Staff Union staged a number of activities in honour of UN50 celebrations. The events ranged from cultural celebrations to distribution of souvenir fountain pens with the UN50 and UN Staff Union logos. Some of these events were reported in the press and contributed to improving the image of the Organization.

The Staff Union sponsors a number of staff welfare activities, including annual Staff Day festivities. The Secretary-General is invited to address the staff at this event. One of the regular features is a widely publicized ceremony honouring staff who have lost their lives in peacekeeping missions. Also, as part of the Staff Day festivities, plaques are awarded to retired staff members who served the Organization for 25 years or more.

The Staff Union sponsors health insurance programmes for staff with household employees on G-5 visas and staff with dependent parents on G-4 visas.

Technological innovations, such as upgrading computer hardware, software and purchase of computer equipment are financed by the Staff Union for the Staff Committee Office. In addition, the Staff Committee pays for a significant amount of its own office supplies.

Any conferences, meetings or activities held outside normal business hours are fully financed by the Union, including sound engineers, electricians, building management and security services.

The Staff Union pays the United Nations Print Shop to print the staff newspaper which represents income for the Office of Conference Services.

A large contribution is paid as annual dues to the CCISUA Federation as membership dues. An annual contribution is also made to the Staff Emergency Fund to assist them in meeting the needs of the staff.

The Union conducts fund-raising activities for a Scholarship Fund for children whose parents have lost their lives while on mission, and a Fund for HIV/AIDS to promote awareness of this issue and to promulgate information on prevention and treatment.

Staff volunteer to work at the outplacement centre that has been jointly established by OHRM and the Staff Union assisting colleagues in need of placement with job search activities.

The Staff Union also conducts extensive training for the G to P examination workshops, making cassettes recordings and distributing them to duty stations worldwide, thus alleviating the need for the OHRM Training Service to address this issue.

Recognizing the needs of parents with young children, the Staff Union offers assistance to staff members with children under age 5 for their child care expenses. These funds are dispensed by a Committee which reviews all applicants to determine that there is a financial need.

The Staff Union has an active Committee on Security and Independence of the International Civil Service. This Committee has been instrumental in obtaining the release of detained staff members throughout the world. A joint fact-finding mission to the Middle East was undertaken last year by the Management and Staff Union.

The year-end statement indicates that there is a significant difference between the amounts budgeted each year and the actual amounts spent. Although the proposed budget for March 1994-March 1996 was $497,300, in fact, only $277,831 was actually expended.

An annual general meeting is held at the end of each year to report on the activities of the Union. A complete financial report is given to each member at that time for their review. All accounts are audited by private auditing firms at the conclusion of the mandate of each Staff Council and the audited statements are provided to the staff representatives for review.

Assets		US dollars
Cash		1 200 010
Certificates of deposit		339 201
Receivables		3 590
Due from other funds		9 555
Fixed assets (net)		684
Total assets		1 553 040
Liabilities		
Accounts payable		3 665
Fund balance		
Prior period balance	1 448 125	
Current period	101 250	
		1 549 375
Total liabilities and Fund balance		1 553 040

VI. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN STAFF ASSOCIATION

ECLAC Staff Association dues (receipts)

ECLAC reports that, at present, there are 400 staff members who pay dues to the ECLAC Staff Association.

Income	US dollars
Staff contributions	30 091.25
Staff Lunch	6 255.35
Stock dividends	520.20
Exchange-rate variation	792.80
For current expenditures	7 375.65
For CCISUA meeting	6 265.00
Bank interest	641.66
- Council: 633.78	
- Cooperative: 7.88	
	51 941.99

ECLAC Staff Association expenditures

Expenditures	US dollars
Choir	1 574.07
Cultural Committee	1 068.44
Sports Committee	592.06
Salaries Committee	4 085.47
Pensions Committee	592.68
General expenditures	446.96
Fees	1 200.00
Missions	7 775.87
National Days	1 740.40
Christmas Party	7 133.20
Sports Day	688.13
Staff Lunch	19 421.62
CCISUA contributions	4 000.00
Total	50 318.90
Financial year surplus	1 623.09
	51 941.99

ECLAC Staff Association activities

The ECLAC Staff Association is active in a wide variety of issues, ranging from the traditional staff representation activities to support of charitable activities, sports and cultural activities as well as ongoing staff welfare and social functions.

VII. UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT VIENNA STAFF UNION

UNOV Staff Union dues (receipts)

The number of dues-paying members was 574 in 1995. Membership dues, in accordance with the statutes and rules of the Staff Union, are calculated on the basis of the formula 1.5 per thousand of net salaries and allowances.

UNOV Staff Union expenditures

Moneys were disposed to cover staff representational activities, several staff welfare projects, cost-sharing of a staff-services office in cooperation with other VIC-based Staff Unions/Association of IAEA and UNIDO, various expenses related to activities for the commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary, CCISUA membership fees and miscellaneous expenses.

The costs of staff representational activities borne by the Vienna Staff Council in 1995 amount to US$ 8,484.86 and included travels to SMCC-XIX Amman, Jordan, for alternate representative and CCISUA Annual Assembly, Santiago, Chile for President and Alternate.